

BALDOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1951

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Baldock U.D.C.,  
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BALDOCK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

To the Chairman and members of the Council

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Lewis and Gentlemen,

By direction of Ministry of Health circular 42/51 I submit a report on the health and sanitary conditions of your district for the year 1951.

Again the local vital statistics continue favourable with a birth rate distinctly above, and a death rate markedly below, the corresponding rates for England and Wales. The Registrar General supplied for your district a Comparability Factor (for deaths) of 1.22 indicating your population to be the youngest in North Herts. From this age distribution arises the particularly pressing local problems of housing and over-crowding from sub-tenancy.

I would acknowledge having received during the year every consideration and help from your Council and its officers.

I am, Mrs. Lewis and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

V.R.WALKER

District Medical Officer of Health.

June 1952.

SECTION A LOCAL STATISTICS.

|   |     |     |     |     |              |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| Area of District  | ... | ... | ... | ... | 542 acres.   |
| Population - Registrar-General's Estimate for mid-1951  | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6,022        |
| Number of separately rated hereditaments at 31st December 1951 (including 1,463 inhabited houses) | ... | ... | ... | ... | 1,735        |
| Rateable Value..  | ... | ... | ... | ... | £33,394      |
| Sum Represented by a Penny Rate...  | ... | ... | ... | ... | £133.16. 2d. |

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the Year 1951.

LIVE BIRTHS

|  | <u>Totals</u> | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> | <u>Baldock<br/>Urban<br/>District</u> | <u>Comparable rate for<br/>England and Wales.</u> |
|--|---------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| Legitimate   | 90            | 46          | 44            |                                       |   |
| Illegitimate   | 7             | 6           | 1             |                                       |   |
| All  | <u>97</u>     | <u>52</u>   | <u>45</u>     |                                       |   |
| Rate per 1,000 of the estimated<br>resident population | ...           | ...         |               | 16.1                                  | 15.5  |

DEATHS:                      55          21          34

Rate per 1,000 of the estimated  
resident population          ...          ...          9.1          12.5

STILL BIRTHS:

|   |            |          |          |     |    |
|---|------------|----------|----------|-----|----|
| Legitimate                                      | NIL        | -        | -        |     |    |
| Illegitimate                                    | NIL        | -        | -        |     |    |
| All   | <u>NIL</u> | <u>-</u> | <u>-</u> |     |    |
| Rate per 1,000 total (live and<br>still) births | ...        | ...      | ...      | NIL | 23 |

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR:

|  |     |     |     |          |          |
|--|-----|-----|-----|----------|----------|
| Rate for all infants per 1,000<br>live births                                    | ... | ... | ... | 21       | 30       |
| Actual number of such deaths (a) under 4<br>weeks and (b) total under<br>1 year. |     |     |     |          |          |
| Legitimate ...   | ... | ... | ... | 2        | 2        |
| Illegitimate..   | ... | ... | ... | -        | -        |
| All ...  | ... | ... | ... | <u>2</u> | <u>2</u> |
| Deaths from Puerperal causes   | ... |     |     | NIL      |          |
| Deaths from Cancer (all sites)   | ... |     |     | 11       |          |
| Deaths from Measles  | ... | ... | ... | NIL      |          |
| Deaths from Whooping Cough..   | ... |     |     | NIL      |          |
| Deaths from other infective<br>and parasitic diseases                            | ... | ... | ... | NIL      |          |

Comments on vital statistics for the year.

The estimated mid-year population shows an increase of 76 on mid-1950.

The local birth and death rates again compare favourably with other North Herts. districts, while stillbirth and infant death rates are both low.

The chief causes of death were: Heart and other Circulatory Diseases 23; Cancer (all sites) 11; and Vascular Lesions of the Nervous System 2. There was one (male) death from Motor Vehicle Accidents.

## SECTION B - GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

No important change occurred during the year.

## SECTION C SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

1. Water There has been no material change during the year. All premises in the district are provided with a direct piped supply of water, which continues to be satisfactory both in quantity and quality.
2. Drainage and Sewerage No important alterations were made during the year to the Town's sewerage systems. Work on the enlargement of the Letchworth U.D.C. Sewage Works has commenced, but it will be a considerable time before the new joint sewage disposal scheme comes into operation.
3. Rivers and Streams Samples of water from the River Ivel were regularly submitted for analysis, and the results showed that the dissolved oxygen content was sufficient to support fish life.
4. Closet Accommodation All dwelling houses in the district are provided with water closets.
5. Public Cleansing A weekly collection of refuse is still maintained.
6. Sanitary Inspection of the Area
  - (a) Number of inspections of dwellinghouses (under Public Health & Housing Acts).....53
  - (b) Number of inspections carried out under Food & Drugs Act (including shops, restaurants, sampling of ice-cream etc).....92
  - (c) Number of inspections carried out under Factories Act.....28
  - (d) Number of nuisances dealt with (not including those under (a) above).....7
  - (e) Number of investigations regarding infectious disease.....8
  - (f) Number of inspections in connection with drainage matters.....34
  - (g) Number of inspections of schools.....7
  - (h) Number of inspections in connection with water supply and sampling.....25
  - (i) Miscellaneous Inspections.....47
  - (j) Rodent Control: During the year 81 separate premises were dealt with, the majority of infestations being of a minor character.
  - (k) Swimming Bath (Private): Samples taken regularly during the summer months ensured that a satisfactory standard was maintained.
7. Staff The Assistant Sanitary Inspector, Mr. H. Knighton resigned his post on 31st August, to take up another appointment elsewhere, and his position has been filled by Mr. W. R. Brookman who commenced his duties on 22nd October.

## SECTION D HOUSING

### Council Housing Schemes

During the year 26 three-bedroom houses were completed and occupied, bringing the total number of separate units of accommodation owned by the Council to 781.



## Private Ownership

One additional unit of accommodation was provided by conversion during 1951.

### Inspection of Dwellinghouses During the Year.

- (1) Number of dwellinghouses inspected (for housing defects under Public Health or Housing Acts).....29  
Number of inspections made for the purpose.....53
- (2) Number of dwellinghouses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.....Nil
- (3) Number of dwellinghouses (exclusive of those referred to under (2) above) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation....23
- (4) Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices under Public Health & Housing Acts.
  - (a) By owners.....5
  - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners..Nil
- (5) Number of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or its officers.....16
- (6) Housing Act 1936 - Overcrowding.
  - (a) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year.....10  
Number of families dwelling therein.....21  
Number of persons dwelling therein.....87
  - (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year.....1
  - (c) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year.....5  
Number of persons concerned in such cases21
  - (d) Particulars of any cases in which dwellinghouses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority has taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding.....Nil

## SECTION E INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

During the year regular inspections of food premises were carried out and informal action taken to secure compliance with the Council's Byelaws, and the Food & Drugs Act.

Samples of ice-cream were taken regularly throughout the year and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination. The following foodstuffs were condemned as unfit for human consumption:-

|          |        |                       |
|----------|--------|-----------------------|
| 179 lbs. | 3 ozs. | Imported Canned Ham.  |
| 89 "     | 3 "    | Imported Canned Meat. |
| 12 "     | -      | Meat Products.        |
| 50 "     | 14 "   | Canned Fruit.         |
| 1 "      | 8 "    | Canned Vegetables.    |
|          | 8 "    | Canned Fish.          |
|          | 146    | Imported Eggs.        |

SECTION F      PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS  
AND OTHER DISEASES.

The Total notifications of acute infectious disease (after correction) were: Whooping cough 40; measles 18; scarlet fever 8; and acute pneumonia 9. There was again a marked freedom from serious infectious disease, 1951 also being for the town an "Interval Year" regarding measles.

Whooping Cough was mildly epidemic in the first quarter when there also occurred 6 of the 9 notified cases of acute pneumonia.

Scarlet Fever continued mild in its severity and again the notified cases fell almost wholly in the 5-9 year age group.

Diphtheria. For another year no case of diphtheria was notified in the district. Despite its continued absence from the area the offer of infant protection by immunisation continued to be accepted by a large majority of parents.

TUBERCULOSIS      New Cases and Deaths during the year 1951.

| <u>Age</u><br><u>Periods.</u>                                    | <u>New Cases</u>   |   |                        |   | <u>Deaths.</u>     |   |                        |   |
|--|--------------------|---|------------------------|---|--------------------|---|------------------------|---|
|  | <u>Respiratory</u> |   | <u>Non-Respiratory</u> |   | <u>Respiratory</u> |   | <u>Non-Respiratory</u> |   |
|  | M                  | F | M                      | F | M                  | F | M                      | F |
| 0 - 1  | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 1 - 5  | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 5 - 15   | -                  | - | -                      | 1 | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 15 - 25  | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 25 - 35  | 1                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 35 - 45  | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 45 - 55  | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| 55 - 65  | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| and over   | -                  | - | -                      | - | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| Totals   | 1                  | - | -                      | 1 | -                  | - | -                      | - |
| Deaths allocated by the Registrar-General after final transfers. |                    |   |                        |   | -                  | - | -                      | - |

The above low number of new notifications and the absence of any local death are very favourable indiccs.

June 1952.

V.R. WALKER  
District Medical Officer  
of Health.